Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------032066 021244Z /10
O 021235Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2319

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 20033

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR PINS EG IS
SUBJECT: CAIRO PREPARATORY CONFERENCE--ISRAELI JOURNALISTS

1. LAST EVENING ACTING FONMIN GHALI EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE LARGE NUMBER OF ISRAELI JOURNALISTS WHO MIGHT WISH TO BE PRESENT FOR THE CAIRO CONFERENCE. HE HAD HEARD SUGGESTIONS THERE MIGHT BE AS MANY AS 800 ISRAELI JOURNALISTS WANTING TO COME. ANY SUCH LARGE NUMBER WOULD POSE ACCOMMODATION AND SECURITY PROBLEMS FOR GOE. HIS PERSONAL VIEW WAS THAT A "QUOTA" SHOULD BE FIXED FOR FOREIGN JOURNALISTS.

2. THIS MORNING VP MUBARAK TELEPHONED TO ASK THAT WE CONVEY TO ISRAELIS THAT GOE WILL BE ABLE TO ACCEPT ONLY "ONE OR TWO" FROM EACH MAJOR ISRAELI NEWSPAPER OR TV NETWORK. HE, TOO, NOTED THE SECURITY PROBLEMS WHICH WOULD ARISE IF THERE WERE LARGE NUMBERS OF ISRAELI JOURNALISTS.

3. WHEN I MET WITH GHALI LATER IN THE DAY, I TOLD HIM ABOUT THE VP'S TELEPHONE CALL. GHALI WAS RELIEVED THAT HIS RECOMMENDATION HAD BEEN ACCEPTED. HE THEN SPELLED OUT SOME OF HIS WORRIES A BIT MORE. HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS ARE SHARPLY LIMITED IN CAIRO. MOREOVER, AS HE SAW IT, THE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFERENCE IS LIKELY TO BE NEWSWORTHY ONLY FOR THE FIRST DAY OR SO, I.E. WHEN THE EGYPTIANS AND THE ISRAELIS SIT DOWN TOGETHER. THEREAFTER, ESPECIALLY IF THE CONFERENCE RUNS TWO OR THREE WEEKS, THE JOURNALISTS ARE LIKELY TO BECOME RESTIVE AND WANDER ALL OVER CAIRO. THEY WILL SEE AND FILE STORIES ON THE PROBLEMS FACING A CITY OF 8 MILLION PEOPLE WITH SERVICES AND HOUSING FOR NO

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MORE THAN 3 MILLION AT MOST. THIS WOULD NOT BE GOOD FOR EGYPT'S IMAGE. HE ALSO THOUGHT ISRAELI JOURNALISTS WOULD WANDER INTO SOME OF THE POORER SECTIONS OF THIS SPRAWLING CITY. IT WOULD BE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO ENSURE THEIR SECURITY IN SOME OF THESE QUARTERS AND HE DID NOT WANT ANY INCIDENTS TO TAKE PLACE, THE EFFECT OF WHICH WOULD BE TO MARR THE POSITIVE IMAGE THAT GOE HOPES TO ACHIEVE FROM THE CONFERENCE.

4. GHALI NOTED THAT ONLY 15 EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS HAD MADE THE TRIP TO JERUSALEM. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS LIMITATION WAS A GOE DECISION, BUT THOUGHT IT WAS REASONABLE THAT THERE BE SOME RECIPROCITY IN THE NUMBER OF ISRAELI JOURNALISTS WHO WILL COME TO CAIRO FOR THE CONFERENCE.

5. UNLESS DEPT PERCEIVES OBJECTION, SUGGEST AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NOTIFY APPROPRIATE ISRAELI AUTHORITY OF LIMITATION SET BY VP MUBARAK AS INDICATED PARA 2 ABOVE. SUGGEST THIS LIMITATION BE EXPLAINED IN GENERAL TERMS OF HOTEL ACCOMMODATION SHORTAGES AND POTENTIAL SECURITY PROBLEMS, BUT WITHOUT GOING INTO ALL OF THE DETAIL THAT GHALI PROVIDED. EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 02-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Subject: CAIRO PREPARATORY CONFERENCE--ISRAELI JOURNALISTS
TAGS: MARR, PINS, OTRA, EG, IS, (GHALI, BOUTROS)
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